

REMARKS:

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C §102

The Examiner's rejection of Claims 1, 5-14, 21-25, 31, 34, 35, and 41-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Seelig, U.S. Patent No. 5,560,603 is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons given below.

Seelig is, quite simply, not the integrated *bonus* round attraction display of Applicants' invention. Seelig discloses a separate game all unto itself, not a pure attraction device.

The Seelig patent discloses a main racing display 120 and a plurality of slot machines 100A, 110B, 110C, and 110D each having rotating wheels 118. The racing display 120 displays a plurality of racing elements 122A, 122B, 122C, and 122D, which correspond to each of the plurality of slot machines 100A, 110B, 110C, and 110D. Each of the slot machines and each racing element has its own timer display 122A, 122B, 122C, and 122D on the racing display 120. Col. 4, lines 52-53. Each time a predetermined combination of indicia appears on the rotating wheels 118 of a slot machine, the corresponding racing element for that slot machine advances on the racing display 120. Each racing element is racing against the clock, *independently* of the other racing elements. Col. 2, lines 2-3. Prizes are awarded depending on the position of each racing element (Win, Place, Show) before the clock/timer has timed out. Col. 2, lines 9-13. The Seelig patent contemplates that each slot machine may include its own racing display so that the player can more easily see his racing element and timer without having to look up at the main display. Col. 2, lines 3-6; Col. 5, lines 1-3. It should be noted that if a player obtains the predetermined combination of indicia on the rotating *wheels it has no effect on the other player's slot machines or racing element.*

The aforementioned Claims of the present Application introduce new methods and systems of linked gaming machines wherein an *attraction* mechanism of each gaming machine is

operated *as a group* when any player enters at a predetermined event. The predetermined event can be activation or entry into a bonus round on any one or more of the gaming machines. The operation of the group of attraction mechanisms can be in a seriatim fashion (i.e. one after another; in a series), random activation through out the room, or any other choreographed manner. Page 7, lines 16-27.

The activation of the attraction mechanism on all of the gaming machines serves to advertise that a lucky player has achieved the bonus round. Page 7, lines 3-5. This should inspire and motivate other players to press on to achieve the same end, providing positive reinforcement for their effort. Page 7, lines 6-7. Additionally, all of the linked gaming machines could enter a bonus round if any one of the gaming machines enters a bonus round. Page 7, lines 10-11. Therefore, the results of one gaming machine *can affect the results of a gaming machine* played by another player. But the activation of the attraction mechanism is not a “game” or “bonus” itself, but just a giant “whoopie!”

In contrast to Applicants foregoing Claims, the Seelig patent does not disclose or suggest linked gaming machines with an attraction feature on each gaming machine that go off together in some fashion. For the reasons stated above, the Seelig patent fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention concerning Claims 1,5,8-10, 13-14, 18,21-22,25,31, 34-37,41, and 43-44.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C §103

The Examiner’s rejection of Claims 2-4, 15-20, 26-28, and 36-40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seelig, U.S. Patent No. 5,560,603 in view of Hartman, PCT Publication No. WO 98/14251 is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons given below.

The Seelig patent is described and distinguished above.

The Hartman Publication discloses a slot machine with a robot for increasing player interest in slot machine play. Each slot machine includes its own robot. Page 6, lines 18-19. The robot may be programmed to respond to different indications on the output line 24 of the corresponding slot machine. Page 6, lines 11-17. The response of the robot can include waving its arms and shouting to the player, somersaults, or throwing candy. Page 6, lines 14-17. The robot may be in the shape of a lifelike human or cartoon character. Page 6, lines 9-10. It should be noted that if a player obtains an indication on the output line of the slot machine that activates the robot, it has no effect on the entry into bonus rounds or the winnings for other players. In stark contrast to Applicants' invention, Hartman has its "robot" keyed to only one player who has caused its activation. See WO98/14251 p. 6. Hartman discusses the possibility of "a single robot or combination of robots associated with a group of machines," but this is for directing "its actions and sounds toward any *one* of the slot players." *Id.*, emphasis added. Hartman thus is confined to a single individualized attractor aimed at the lucky player. Hartman does not suggest or disclose linking a plurality of attractors that are each respectively associated with a separate machine.

Again, the aforementioned Claims of the present Application has the gaming machines linked such that if a predetermined event occurs on any one of the gaming machines, then the attraction mechanism on each linked gaming machine is operated as a group. The predetermined event can further be activation or *entry into a bonus round on all of the gaming machines*. See Claim 37. As such, the *results of one gaming machine can have an effect on winnings* of the other linked gaming machines.

In contrast to Applicants foregoing Claims, the Seelig patent, the Hartman publication, nor a combination thereof do not teach or suggest the activation of bonus games on all linked gaming machines by an occurrence of a predetermined event on any one of the gaming

machines. At best, Seelig is an interactive bonus game. At best, Hartman has one (or more) robots throwing candy at a single (lucky?) player. The Seelig patent, the Hartman publication, nor a combination do not teach or suggest the operation of multiple linked attraction mechanisms on separate machines that provide positive feedback (including in one aspect additional winnings) *to all linked players due to an achievement of any one of the players*. The Seelig patent, the Hartman publication, nor a combination thereof do not teach or suggest a plurality of linked attraction mechanisms distributed among linked gaming machines in the form of human figures that can dance in *a choreographed* manner due to an achievement of any one of the players.

Additionally, Claims 2-4 depend from to all players independent Claim 1; Claims 15-20 depend from independent Claim 14; Claims 26-28 depend from independent Claim 24; and Claims 36-40 depend from independent Claim 34. Since Claims 1, 14, 24, and 34 should be allowable for the reasons above, then Claims 2-4, 15-20, 26-28, and 36-40 should also be allowable since each is a dependent Claim of an allowable Claim.

For the reasons stated above, the Seelig patent, the Hartman publication, nor a combination thereof fail to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention concerning Claims 2-4, 15-20, 26-28, and 36-40.

The Examiner's rejection of Claims 29, 32, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seelig, U.S. Patent No. 5,560,603 in view of Tanaka, U.S. Patent No. 5,130,838 is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons given below.

The Seelig patent is described and distinguished above.

The Tanaka patent discloses a laser projection type display unit for displaying images, such a characters, or the present positions of moving objects such as vehicles on a map screen.

Col. 2, line 28 and Col. 2 line 66 to Col. 3, line 1. The laser projection type display unit of Tanaka is specifically tailored for displaying the location and information regarding moving objects on a map screen as in navigation systems. Col. 2, line 64 to Col. 3, line 46.

Applicants respectfully point out that Claims 29, 32, and 45 comprise a method, a gaming system and gaming machines with an attraction feature that is a laser projection system.

In contrast to Applicants foregoing Claims, Seelig and Tanaka do not teach or suggest linked gaming machines with an attraction feature on each gaming machine. Nor do Seelig and Tanaka teach or suggest activation of the attraction features as a group when a player enters a predetermined event on any one of the linked gaming machines.

Applicants have found no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever to combine a gaming machine having an attraction mechanism which is a projected display being generated by a laser projection system, other than their own. Applicants cited Tanaka and Best in their specification as ways to do this. The Examiner cannot combine references without some suggestion or motivation in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. The lack of a suggestion or motivation to combine these references is evidenced by the fact that in all the years of gaming machines, no one has apparently done so. Applicants respectfully suggest that the knowledge to combine these references was gleaned from the Applicants' disclosure.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully point out that Claims 29, 32, and 45 are narrowed Claims that depend from independent Claims 8, 14, and 34. Applicants further point out that Claims 8, 14, and 34 should be allowable as previously discussed. Therefore, Claims 29, 32, and 45 should also be allowable for the same reasons that Claims 8, 14, and 34 should be allowable.

For the reasons stated above, the Seelig patent in view of the Tanaka patent fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention concerning Claims 29, 32, and 45.

The Examiner's rejection of Claims 30, 33, and 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seelig, U.S. Patent No. 5,560,603 in view of Tanaka, U.S. Patent No. 5,130,838 and in further view of Best, U.S. Patent No. 6,176,584 is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons given below.

The Seelig patent and the Tanaka patent are described and distinguished above.

The Best patent discloses a spherical dome imaging system having a field of view limited only by cockpit obstructions. Col. 2, lines 57-59. The spherical dome can be used in a number of applications such as military and civilian simulation systems and commercial entertainment applications. Col. 4, lines 4-8.

The above-noted Claims of the present Application are directed towards a method, gaming machines, and a gaming system having an attraction feature comprising a laser projection system including a domed projection surface with a visual output upon an interior side of the domed projection surface with the output being visible from the outside of the surface.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's statement that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of Applicants' invention "to incorporate the curved surface, real image, laser-based rear projection display system technology of Best et al. in the display system of Seelig et al. in view of Tanaka et al." Office Action, Page 8.

The Examiner stated "Seelig et al. in view of Tanaka et al. seems to lack explicitly showing the laser projection system including a domed projection surface on the gaming machine, the laser projections system projecting the visual output upon an interior side of the surface with the output being visible from the outside of the surface" and "Doing so provides a

source of generating and displaying and attraction animation.” Office Action, page 8. Applicants respectfully point out that the Examiner’s own statement indicates novelty of the combination of these features.

Again, Applicants have found no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever to combine a gaming machine having an attraction feature, a projected display and further including the step of providing a visual output for the display when the attraction feature is caused to operate that comprises a laser projection system including a domed projection surface with a visual output upon an interior side of the surface and the output being visible from the outside of the surface. The Examiner cannot combine references without some suggestion or motivation in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one having ordinary skill in the art. The lack of a suggestion or motivation to combine these references is evidenced by the fact that after all the years of employing gaming machines, no one has apparently done so. Applicants respectfully suggest that the knowledge to combine these references was gleaned from the Applicants’ disclosure.

Additionally, Claims 30 ultimately depends from independent Claim 8; Claim 33 depends from independent Claim 14; and Claim 46 depends from independent Claim 34. Since Claims 8, 14, and 34 should be allowable for the reasons above, then Claims 30, 33, and 46 should also be allowable since each is a dependent Claim of an allowable Claim.

For at least the reasons stated above, the Seelig patent in view of the Tanaka patent in further view of the Best patent fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention concerning Claims 30, 33, and 46.

Therefore, for at least the foregoing reasons, reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested.

A Notice of Allowability is solicited.

October 24, 2003

Baniak Pine & Gannon
150 North Wacker Drive
Suite 1200
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1606
(312) 673-0360

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael H. Baniak", written over a horizontal line.

Michael H. Baniak
Registration No. 30,608
Attorney for Applicants